## LIFELINE®: BEYOND LIFE AND DEATH

by Darlene Miller, PhD

Darlene Miller, a clinical psychologist, has been a program facilitator with TMI since 1985. In addition to serving as a core trainer for GATEWAY VOYAGE®, GUIDELINES®, and LIFELINE®, she is director of the PREP and EXPLORER programs. Before joining the TMI staff, Darlene was director of a 160-bed residential treatment facility for violent juvenile offenders in Colorado. Her background also includes ten years in training program design and implementation, and consultation in team management.

With the successful completion of three *LIFELINE* programs, several commonalities of experience among program participants are beginning to emerge. While the stated purpose (and, we now know, effective result) of *LIFELINE* is to teach participants how to move easily and comfortably into the areas identified as Focus 22 through Focus 27, and then for them to assist in the rescue/retrieval of those who are in need of help to move on, what is becoming apparent is that the participants themselves are benefiting significantly in ways which go beyond the scope and design of the original program.

"Picked up my helper in 27, went to 23 and waited for someone. Just when I was about to give up finding someone, a little Irish lady looked up at me and said, 'Wait ... wait! Don't you go back without me.' She immediately jumped into our vehicle and talked all the way back to 27. When we parked my vehicle (a double pyramid emerald), we stepped out into the park, and she told me her name was Elizabeth McGowan or McCowan. She was well aware that her physical life was over and had been waiting for me to take her to her husband and daughter, who were already in 27 to meet her when we arrived. She said she was from County Cork and corrected me when I referred to it as Cork County. Her death occurred in 1917, and she was a seamstress. Her husband's name is Richard and her daughter, who appeared to be about thirteen, was introduced to me as Amy. Before I could get any more info, they all disappeared together.

"I had time left and was trying to decide what to do when my father appeared. This was unexpected and very emotional for me. as he and I had not resolved a lot of issues when he died in 1985. He had spent eight years drinking severely after my mother died. I tried to support him as best I could for five years, but felt he was going to destroy me and did not have contact with him for the last three years of his life.

"When he appeared, I went through a range of emotions, the strongest being love, guilt, and sadness that I could not stay with him. He did, however, give me a gift. When I asked if we could stay there together, he replied, 'I love you but you need to remember why you came here and never forget your focus.' It was at this point that Bob told us to leave 27, and I left with very mixed emotions, but realized that he had given me forgiveness and freedom and love. What more could I ask for?"

It is challenging to capture fully the impact of the *LIFELINE* program, yet perhaps one participant comes close for many in this summary.

"I learned that all of the levels are within me. And that when I can function from love and gratitude, I can release or 'rescue' all parts of me and bring them into a greater 'Light' of understanding and acceptance. There's no place to go. I'm Home."

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